

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A car seat cover for a car seat comprising a frame, a padding disposed
2 over the frame, a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap
3 comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor point
4 being attached to the frame, and at least one crotch strap, the crotch strap comprising an
5 anchor point attached to the frame and a buckle, the buckle being configured to accept the
6 connectors, the car seat cover comprising:

7 a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled to the
8 car seat frame over the padding, the fabric cover defining a pair of shoulder strap openings
9 and a crotch strap opening, the shoulder strap openings and the crotch strap opening being
10 disposed so as to allow the shoulder straps and the crotch strap to be extended through the
11 fabric cover; and

12 a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border
13 portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat with the cover being disposed to
14 allow the shoulder straps to extend through the shoulder strap openings, the crotch strap to
15 extend through the crotch strap opening, and the connectors to be inserted into the buckle,
16 without detaching any of the anchor points from the frame, such that the shoulder straps and
17 the crotch strap can be used to secure a child in the car seat, with the car seat cover being
18 disposed between the child and the car seat.

1 2. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the border portion
2 comprises an elastic material.

1 3. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the border portion
2 comprises a drawstring.

1 4. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the border portion
2 comprises an attachment mechanism for attaching the car seat cover to a car seat.

1 5. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the car seat cover is
2 configured to protect a child car seat.

1 6. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the car seat cover is
2 configured to protect an infant carrier.

1 7. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, further comprising a support
2 pillow attached to the fabric cover and disposed so as to support the head of a child seated in
3 the car seat.

1 8. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein the pillow is removably
2 attached to the fabric cover.

1 9. A car seat cover as recited in claim 8, wherein the pillow is removably
2 attached using a removable attachment mechanism.

1 10. A car seat cover as recited in claim 9, wherein the removable
2 attachment mechanism is selected from the group consisting of a hoop-and-loop fastener, a
3 snap, a button, a buckle, and adhesive and a zipper.

1 11. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein the pillow is configured
2 to lie underneath the head of the child.

1 12. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein the pillow is configured
2 to cradle the head of the child.

1 13. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, further comprising a flap
2 attached to the car seat cover and disposed so as to cover a portion of at least one of the pair
3 of shoulder strap openings, thereby defining a plurality of strap openings through which one
4 of the pair of shoulder straps can extend.

1 14. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein the flap comprises the
2 same material as the fabric cover.

1 15. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein the flap is substantially
2 rectangular in shape.

1 16. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein at least a portion of the
2 flap is fixedly attached to the fabric cover.

1 17. A car seat cover as recited in claim 7, wherein at least a portion of the
2 flap is removably attached to the fabric cover.

1 18. A car seat cover as recited in claim 17, wherein the portion of the flap
2 is removably attached using an attachment mechanism.

1 19. A car seat cover as recited in claim 18, wherein the attachment
2 mechanism is selected from the group consisting of a hoop-and-loop fastener, a snap, a
3 button, a buckle, and adhesive and a zipper.

1 20. A car seat cover as recited in claim 17, wherein the flap can be
2 removed entirely from the cover.

1 21. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein one of the pair of
2 shoulder strap openings has a length of between about fifteen inches and about twenty-five
3 inches.

1 22. A car seat cover as recited in claim 21, wherein one of the pair of
2 shoulder strap openings has a length of between about sixteen inches and about nineteen
3 inches.

1 23. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein one of the pair of
2 shoulder strap openings has a length of between about five inches and about ten inches.

1 24. A car seat cover as recited in claim 23, wherein one of the pair of
2 shoulder strap openings has a length of between about six inches and about eight inches.

1 25. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the crotch strap opening
2 has a width of between about two inches and about six inches.

1 26. A car seat cover as recited in claim 25, wherein the crotch strap
2 opening has a width of between about three inches and about five inches.

1 27. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the crotch strap opening
2 is substantially circular.

1 28. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the crotch strap opening
2 is substantially rectangular.

1 29. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, further comprising a border
2 portion disposed about a portion of the fabric cover defining the crotch strap opening.

1 30. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the fabric cover has a
2 width of between about twenty-four inches and about forty inches.

1 31. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the fabric cover has a
2 length of between about thirty-five inches and about forty-five inches.

1 32. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the fabric cover
2 comprises an absorbent material.

1 33. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the fabric cover
2 comprises a stain-resistant material.

1 34. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the fabric cover
2 comprises a material to which a water-resistant coating has been applied.

1 35. A car seat cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the car seat cover
2 comprises a disposable material.

1 36. A car seat cover as recited in claim 35, wherein the disposable material
2 is paper.

1 37. A car seat cover for a car seat comprising a frame, a padding disposed
2 over the frame, a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap
3 comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor point
4 being attached to the frame, and at least one crotch strap, the crotch strap comprising an
5 anchor point attached to the frame and a buckle, the buckle being configured to accept the
6 connectors, the car seat cover comprising:

7 a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled to the
8 car seat frame over the padding the fabric cover defining a shoulder strap opening, and a
9 crotch strap opening, the shoulder strap opening and the crotch strap opening being disposed
10 so as to allow the shoulder straps and the crotch strap to be extended through the fabric cover;

11 a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border
12 portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat with the cover being disposed to
13 allow the shoulder straps to extend through the shoulder strap opening, the crotch strap to
14 extend through the crotch strap opening, and the connectors to be inserted into the buckle,
15 without detaching any of the anchor points from the frame, such that the shoulder straps and

16 the crotch strap can be used to secure a child in the car seat, with the car seat cover being
17 disposed between the child and the car seat; and
18 a flap attached to the fabric cover and disposed to substantially cover the
19 shoulder strap opening, the flap and the fabric cover collectively defining a plurality of strap
20 openings disposed so as to allow the shoulder straps to extend through the strap openings.

1 38. A car seat comprising:
2 a frame;
3 a padding disposed over the frame;
4 a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap
5 comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor point
6 being attached to the frame;
7 a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled to the
8 car seat frame over the padding, the fabric cover defining a pair of shoulder strap openings
9 and a crotch strap opening, the shoulder strap openings and the crotch strap opening being
10 disposed so as to allow the shoulder straps and the crotch strap to be extended through the
11 fabric cover; and
12 a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border
13 portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat with the cover being disposed to
14 allow the shoulder straps to extend through the shoulder strap openings, the crotch strap to
15 extend through the crotch strap opening, and the connectors to be inserted into the buckle,
16 without detaching any of the anchor points from the frame, such that the shoulder straps and
17 the crotch strap can be used to secure a child in the car seat, with the car seat cover being
18 disposed between the child and the car seat.

1 39. A car seat as recited in claim 38, wherein the car seat is an infant
2 carrier.

1 40. A method of protecting a car seat comprising a frame, a padding
2 disposed over the frame, a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder
3 strap comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor
4 point being attached to the frame, and at least one crotch strap, the crotch strap comprising an
5 anchor point attached to the frame and a buckle, the buckle being configured to accept the
6 connectors, the method comprising:
7 providing a car seat cover comprising:

8 a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled
9 to the car seat frame over the padding, the fabric cover defining a pair of shoulder
10 strap openings and a crotch strap opening, the shoulder strap openings and the crotch
11 strap opening being disposed so as to allow the shoulder straps and the crotch strap to
12 be extended through the fabric cover; and

13 a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border
14 portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat with the cover being disposed
15 to allow the shoulder straps to extend through the shoulder strap openings, the crotch
16 strap to extend through the crotch strap opening, and the connectors to be inserted into
17 the buckle, without detaching any of the anchor points from the frame, such that the
18 shoulder straps and the crotch strap can be used to secure a child in the car seat, with
19 the car seat cover being disposed between the child and the car seat;

20 securing the car seat cover about car seat by placing the border portion around
21 an outside portion of the frame;

22 extending the shoulder straps through the shoulder strap openings; and

23 extending the crotch strap through the crotch strap opening.

1 41. A method of protecting a car seat as recited in claim 40, wherein the
2 car seat is an infant carrier.

1 42. A method of protecting a car seat as recited in claim 40, the method
2 further comprising:

3 placing a child in the car seat, such that the shoulder straps secure the child's
4 shoulders and the crotch strap extends between the child's legs; and

5 using the buckle and the connectors, securing the shoulder straps to the crotch
6 strap.

1 43. A method of protecting a car seat as recited in claim 40, the method
2 further comprising:

3 removing the car seat cover from the car seat;

4 washing the cover; and

5 re-securing the cover about the car seat.

1 44. A method of protecting a car seat as recited in claim 40, the method
2 further comprising:

removing the car seat cover from the car seat; and
disposing of the car seat cover.

45. A method of protecting a car seat as recited in claim 40, wherein the car seat cover further comprises a flap attached to the car seat cover, the method further comprising disposing the flap so as to cover a portion of at least one of the pair of shoulder strap openings, thereby defining a plurality of strap openings through which one of the pair of shoulder straps can extend.

46. A method of protecting a car seat comprising a frame, a padding disposed over the frame, a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor point being attached to the frame, and at least one crotch strap, the crotch strap comprising an anchor point attached to the frame and a buckle, the buckle being configured to accept the connectors, the method comprising:

providing a car seat cover comprising:

a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled to the car seat frame over the padding the fabric cover defining a shoulder strap opening, and a crotch strap opening, the shoulder strap opening and the crotch strap opening being disposed so as to allow the shoulder straps and the crotch strap to be extended through the fabric cover;

a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat with the cover being disposed to allow the shoulder straps to extend through the shoulder strap opening, the crotch strap to extend through the crotch strap opening, and the connectors to be inserted into the buckle, without detaching any of the anchor points from the frame, such that the shoulder straps and the crotch strap can be used to secure a child in the car seat, with the car seat cover being disposed between the child and the car seat; and

a flap attached to the fabric cover;

securing the car seat cover about car seat by placing the border portion around an outside portion of the frame;

extending the shoulder straps through the shoulder strap openings;

extending the crotch strap through the crotch strap opening; and

25 disposing the flap to substantially cover the shoulder strap opening, so that the
26 flap and the fabric cover collectively define a plurality of strap openings disposed so as to
27 allow the shoulder straps to extend through the strap openings.

1 47. A method of protecting a car seat as recited in claim 46, wherein the
2 car seat is an infant carrier.

1 48. A car seat cover for a car seat comprising a frame, a padding disposed
2 over the frame, a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap
3 comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor point
4 being attached to the frame, and at least one crotch strap, the crotch strap comprising an
5 anchor point attached to the frame and a connector, the buckle being configured to accept the
6 connectors, the car seat cover comprising:

7 a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled to the
8 car seat frame over the padding;

9 a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border
10 portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat; and

11 a canopy attached to the fabric cover and disposed to cover at least a portion
12 of a child seated in the car seat.

1 49. A car seat cover as recited in claim 48, wherein the fabric cover
2 defines a pair of shoulder strap openings and a crotch strap opening, the shoulder strap
3 openings and the crotch strap opening being disposed so as to allow the shoulder straps and
4 the crotch strap to be extended through the fabric cover, and wherein the cover is disposed to
5 allow the shoulder straps to extend through the shoulder strap openings, the crotch strap to
6 extend through the crotch strap opening, and the connectors to be inserted into the buckle,
7 without detaching any of the anchor points from the frame, such that the shoulder straps and
8 the crotch strap can be used to secure a child in the car seat, with the car seat cover being
9 disposed between the child and the car seat.

1 50. A car seat cover as recited in claim 48, wherein the canopy comprises a
2 canopy body having an outer periphery, at least one border portion disposed about at least a
3 portion of the outer periphery of the canopy body, and at least one support member attached
4 to the canopy body, the at least one support member providing structural support to the
5 canopy body.

1 51. A car seat cover as recited in claim 50, wherein the canopy further
2 comprises a coupling mechanism attached to at least one of the canopy body, the support
3 member and the border portion, the coupling mechanism being configured to allow an object
4 to be attached to the canopy.

1 52. A car seat comprising:
2 a frame;
3 a padding disposed over the frame;
4 a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap
5 comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor point
6 being attached to the frame;
7 a fabric cover having an outer periphery that is adapted to be coupled to the
8 car seat frame over the padding,;
9 a border portion disposed about the outer periphery, wherein the border
10 portion is adapted to secure the cover about the car seat; and
11 a canopy attached to the fabric cover and disposed to cover at least a portion
12 of a child seated in the car seat.

1 53. A car seat as recited in claim 52, wherein the canopy further comprises
2 at least one coupling mechanism configured to allow an object to be coupled to the canopy.

1 54. A method of protecting a child, the method comprising:
2 providing a car seat, the car seat comprising:
3 a frame;
4 a padding disposed over the frame;
5 a first shoulder strap and a second shoulder strap, each shoulder strap
6 comprising a connector, an upper anchor point and a lower anchor point, each anchor
7 point being attached to the frame;
8 at least one crotch strap, the crotch strap comprising an anchor point
9 attached to the frame and a connector, the buckle being configured to accept the
10 connectors; and
11 a fabric cover comprising an outer periphery that is adapted to be
12 coupled to the car seat frame over the padding, a border portion disposed about the

13 outer periphery, wherein the border portion is adapted to secure the cover about the
14 car seat; and
15 a canopy attached to the fabric cover and disposed to cover at least a
16 portion of a child seated in the car seat; and
17 extending the canopy to cover at least a portion of a child seated in the car
18 seat.

1 55. A method as recited in claim 54, wherein the car seat further comprises
2 a coupling mechanism attached to the canopy and configured to allow an object to be coupled
3 to the canopy, the method further comprising coupling an object to the canopy.